133 northwest of the peninsula and separated from the peninsula by a channel. The Ushkani Islands northwest of Svatoy Noz, on the other hand, rise on this ridge and consist of the same stone as Ol'khon Island.

South of the Uda valley depression there next follows in parallel strips, running in the direction of Lake Baykal, the ridges of the Tsagan-Daban and the Khudumskiy Mountain Range, then--beginning in the west on the Khilok--the Saganskiy Mountain Range and the Tsagan-Khurtey, which is bordered on the south by the broad valley of the Khilok. The railroad follows the upper part of the Khilok. Between Khilok and Chikoy there then rises the Malkhanskiy Mountain Range which on the east flows into the Yablonovyy Ridge. All the valley depressions, such as that of the Uda, the Khilok, and the Chikoy, which on the west over a great width melts into the Selenga steppes, put on a different face the farther one goes to the east. The differences in height between the bottom of the valleys and the ridges become smaller, the slopes become flatter, the mountain forms become round, often with almost flat watersheds. The bottoms of the valleys lie at 850 to 950 meters above sea level, the passes have a height of 1,000 to 1,150 meters, and the peaks are 1,200 to 1,400 meters high. Toward the east the climate becomes markedly more contrary and damper, and accordingly the bottoms of the valleys /221/ show signs of increasing swampiness.
361 Correspondingly the population, which is limited almost exclusively to the valleys, also decreases toward the east. Because of the railroad line the valley of the Khilok is the best inhabited. In this connection Petrovsk-Zabaykal'skiy should be mentioned. It lies on the railroad line coming from Ulan-Ude on a section between the Saganskiy Mountain Range and the Tsagan-Khurtey and has the largest single foundry in Transbaykal. The iron ore is delivered by the mines of Balyagansk northwest of Petrovsk, and the coal comes from Tarbagatay and Khalyarta in the valley of the Khilok. All three localities lie not far from Petrovsk and are connected to the main line by railroads. The valley area of the upper Khilok and that of the Chikoy are distinguished from the other regions in Transbaykal by the fact that in these valleys summer rye is well cultivated as grain for bread, while otherwise the cultivation of wheat predominates.

Apart from the above-mentioned coal mining localities, the city-like settlements of Khokhotuy and Bada, known for their processing of lumber, and also Khilok and Mogzon lie on the railroad line east of Petrovsk-Zabaykal'skiy and still in the valley of the Khilok, which flows into the Selenga. Khilok and Mogzon have, in addition to food

361 563 lie at a distance from the Amur are as good as uninhabited and in many cases are also unknown. Besides the Goldi and Gilyak, who, being fishing peoples, live in fixed dwellings primarily on the Amur and its tributaries, there are reindeer-breeding Samaghir who traverse the region of the Gorin, and the Negidal of the Amgun region, who are smaller in number. The Olcha are diffused on the right side of [135] the Amur. Findings of gold, which have been made on almost all the left tributaries of the lower course of the Amur, have given some spurs to settlement in very recent times. The rivers on which gold has been found are the Limuri, Pilda, Bichi, and it has also been found in Orel Lake as well as on the lower course of the Amgun.

361 The most important localities on the lower course of the Amur are Komsomol'sk and Nikolayevsk. Komsomol'sk lies alone in a vast, unoccupied region of the left bank of the Amur. The city arose only after 1926 from the small fishing village of Perskoye; it was the creation of the Communist youth (Komsomol), from which it has received its name. [161] By 1939 it already numbered 70,000 inhabitants, and today its population is estimated to be more than 150,000. The [39] city has a large river harbor with an important shipyard in which sea-going ships are also built. [327] The largest undertaking is the steel and rolling mill, "Amur Steel," which is supposed to have been expanded to an annual capacity of 500,000 tons of crude iron through the construction of three blast furnaces. [382] The already existing oil refinery has been enlarged by the addition of a cracking installation. A second [37] heat power plant is under construction, and a large water power plant was completed some time ago to supply the city with electricity. In addition, the city houses around twenty additional industrial undertakings and promises to become the economic center of the entire area around the lower Amur. 361 496 Already several years ago the city was connected with the Amur Railroad west of Khabarovsk by a railroad line, which begins in Volochayevka. In order to counteract the difficulties of building a railroad in the damp Amur plain, the railroad was laid on the western edge of the plain and also goes around Lake Bolon' in the west. With this course, new dry areas were opened up to agriculture, and at the same time the rich supplies of wood in the forests /259/ have been brought closer to exploitation. Of greatest significance, however, is the fact that Komsomol'sk is the end of the BAM. By using this railroad the vast areas of the northern Amur country have in Komsomol'sk their nearest exit to the sea. However, the natural unfavorability of the mouth of the Amur has led to a